

**Louisiana's Legislative Priorities**  
**October 26, 2005**

**1.) Commit and fully fund comprehensive Levee Protection and Coastal Restoration**

- Make a clear federal commitment to a comprehensive system of category 5 hurricane protection levees for South Louisiana.
- Make a commitment to fund and implement a comprehensive coastal restoration program to restore America's Wetland and to mitigate adverse effects of hurricanes.
- Fully integrate hurricane levee protection and coastal initiatives into a single program so they are a comprehensive, long-term solution.
- Streamline the Corps of Engineers process to eliminate lengthy, traditional feasibility studies which combined with implementation can take up to 20 years to complete. We do not have 20 storm seasons to wait.

**2.) Provide Immediate Financial Relief and Assistance for Business Recovery**

- Allocate \$200 million for bridge loans to continue existing Louisiana Small Business Bridge Loan Program.
- Direct the Small Business Administration (SBA) to expedite disaster loan processing.
- Provide funding for business grants on appropriate scale based on impact to businesses that parallels those provided to lower-Manhattan for economic recovery after 9/11.
- Direct the SBA or Congress to mandate use of any Louisiana banks that can originate loans to originate SBA Disaster Loans, rather than using only preferred lenders. Existing banks with the loan capacity typically have a relationship to the customer already, so they can likely accelerate the application process as a result.

**3.) Provide Tax Incentives for Businesses and Individuals to Return and Rebuild**

- Support the President's Gulf Opportunity (GO) Zone program to target rebuilding of all the affected communities along the Gulf Coast.
- Include in the GO Zone or separately create unique incentives that will provide benefits for citizens who return to rebuild the affected areas, using instruments such as personal income tax holidays, housing investment tax credits to spur reconstruction and repopulation, and tax credits for relocation expenses of individuals or businesses that return to the hurricane impact areas.
- Include in the GO Zone or separately create tax incentive programs to spur business capital reinvestment, job creation and retention, relief for small businesses, agricultural and fisheries assistance, residential development, and to set in place tax and investment programs that will provide for the long term economic recovery and growth.
- Include in the GO Zone or separately authorize Tax Exempt-Private Activity "Hurricane Recovery Bonds" in the scale necessary to address the size of these disasters' impacts, and in a form similar to the Liberty Bond program authorized for lower Manhattan after 9/11.

#### **4) Make Required Changes in the Stafford Act to Provide the Appropriate Support to State and Local Governments for Disasters of Extraordinary Magnitude**

- Provide Louisiana with 100% cost share for Categories A and B for the duration of the incident for Hurricanes Katrina and Rita as was done after Hurricane Andrew and 9/11.
- Change federal rules to allow 100% funding for Categories C-G for extraordinary disasters like Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.
- Amend the Stafford Act to allow 100% funding for the Hazard Mitigation Program.
- Provide for extension of FEMA deadlines for assessment and application for funds to repair wastewater treatment and drinking water infrastructure.

#### **5) Provide Critical Financial Stability to Local and Municipal Governments in Affected Areas**

- Return Community Disaster Loan provisions to those in place prior to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, which allowed provisions for Community Disaster Loan forgiveness.
- Provide Community Development Block Grants to help local communities rebuild valuable public infrastructure with the appropriate waivers for ease of CDBG funding.

#### **6) Maintain Medicaid Safety Net for Evacuee Families and Their Communities in Louisiana and Across the Country**

- Provide 100% cost share for Medicaid-eligible evacuees from the affected areas of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.
- Provide 100% match to uncompensated care providers to address the financial burdens they incur in caring for Hurricane Katrina and Rita populations.

#### **7) Support the Redevelopment of Educational Institutions Affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita**

- Provide for immediate, short-term operational funding for K-12 local school systems that have been impacted by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.
- Provide critical funding for workforce training and literacy skills upgrades to allow Louisiana to train our workers to participate in the rebuilding of south Louisiana.
- Provide for Financial Stability, Faculty Recruitment, and Rebuilding of Higher Education Institutions throughout Louisiana that have been impacted by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

#### **8) Provide Appropriate Funding to Address Immediate and Future Transportation Infrastructure Needs to Support South Louisiana**

- Provide funding to replace and improve critical roads that were damaged by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.
- Provide funding for development and enhancement of Hurricane Evacuation Routes to ensure the safety of the citizens of South Louisiana.

- Provide funding to address congestion mitigation for areas with increased population as a result of citizens displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.